

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK SERVICES PORTFOLIO



DO YOU HAVE AN UP-TO-DATE, COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK?

- A well-written and well-maintained employee handbook is vital from a legal standpoint. Our clients have access to two versions of a completed employee handbook that is regularly reviewed and updated by attorneys.

DO YOU HAVE A SMALL OR UNDERSTAFFED HR DEPARTMENT?

- HR departments are often short on time and swamped with numerous important tasks. Finding time to write an employee handbook and keep it updated can be difficult.

IS YOUR HANDBOOK READILY AVAILABLE TO EMPLOYEES?

- According to GuideSpark, a leader in employee communications and engagement, nearly 50 percent of millennials didn't read most of their employer's handbook. Provide your employees with an electronic copy of your handbook so that they can access your workplace policies at their leisure.

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HR INSIGHTS

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Designing an Employee Handbook

An employee handbook is an easy way to transmit important information to employees in a comprehensive manner. Employee handbooks provide company information for new employees, serve as a reference for seasoned employees, ensure that all individuals are consistently treated with regard to company policies and procedures, and can protect the company from potential lawsuits.

When creating a handbook for your company, draft it as a quick reference guide for employees. Generally, it is best to keep the document under 20 pages. Handbooks should be reviewed every one to three years to ensure the policies and procedures are still relevant and up to date. In addition, it is best to individualize your handbook so that each policy pertains specifically to your company and employees.

Employee Handbook Best Practices

1. Have your handbook reviewed by legal counsel to ensure it does not contain unlawful provisions or language that could be interpreted as creating an employment contract.
2. Make sure your handbook clearly states that it is not a contract and that the employment relationship is “at will” and can be ended at any time with or without cause.
3. Include a statement that has the right to revise policies at any time.
4. Include an effective date on each page of the employee handbook and include a statement that the current handbook replaces any previous handbook.
5. Require employees to sign a statement acknowledging that they have received the handbook and understand its provisions. Keep a copy in each employee’s personnel file.
6. Make sure that your handbook includes a list of offenses which are subject to discipline (but also note it is not a comprehensive list).
7. Be sure to include an email, voicemail and Internet usage policy.
8. Include a section concerning equal employment opportunity and harassment.

It is best to individualize your handbook so that each policy pertains specifically to your company and employees. It is also a good idea to have legal counsel review your handbook to ensure compliance with various employment and benefits laws.

9. General language gives you flexibility and allows your handbook to be changed easily.
10. Common trouble areas include policies on discipline/progressive discipline, layoffs, severance pay, probationary periods, performance evaluations, work rules and employee benefits. If you choose to include policies on these topics, legal counsel should carefully review them.
11. Make sure that the documentation within your organization is consistent.
12. Define the terms that you use, such as “excessive tardiness,” “insubordination,” etc.
13. Make sure supervisors understand that their discretion is limited and that they cannot modify the handbook. Consider supervisor training sessions on policies such as FMLA, ADA, harassment, employee discipline, interviews, etc.
14. Review your handbook annually to make changes and then have legal counsel review those provisions. Give employees notice and have them sign off on significant changes.

Employee Handbook Checklist

Included	Policy Title and Description	Needs to be altered by each employer	Check for state-specific content
Introduction			
	Welcome and Purpose —This document introduces readers to the handbook and informs them that following handbook policies is a condition of employment, but that the relationship is at-will.		
	At-Will Employment Statement —This document explains that employment can be terminated by either party at any time, and that there should be no illusion of a contractual agreement between employees and the Company.	X	
	Mission Statement —This document explains the Company’s mission, details how superior employees are selected and gives an overview of how the Company intends to fulfill its mission.	X	
Employment Policies			
	Americans with Disability Policy —This policy outlines to employees how your company complies with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).	X	
	Employment Termination Policy —This policy explains the different circumstances under which an employee may be terminated (resignation, termination or layoff), provides notice period expectations for employees who choose to resign, and details other situations that may result in termination.		X
	Equal Employment Opportunity —This policy explains that the Company provides an equal employment opportunity to all individuals and values a diverse workforce.	X	
	Internal Transfer or Promotion Policy —This policy explains that movement and advancement within the company is encouraged, employees may be transferred or promoted at times, and that moves within the company may be management- or employee-initiated.		
	I-9 Immigration Reform Policy —This policy explains that the Company will only employ persons legally eligible to work in the United States, in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.	X	
Workplace Conduct			

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Provided by:

A Manual of Employee Benefits & Personnel Policies

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Introduction

Welcome and Purpose

The Employee Handbook establishes policies, procedures, benefits and working conditions that will be followed by all employees as a condition of their employment with .

strives to provide an employee-friendly environment in which goal-oriented individuals thrive. Our company commitment to serving customers and providing quality products and services is unwavering. These policies, procedures and working conditions provide a work environment in which both customer and employee interests are served.

We value our employee's talents, skills and abilities and seek to foster an open, cooperative and dynamic environment in which we can all excel. provides an environment where employees are encouraged to bring ideas **and** challenges to any level of management.

is an equal opportunity employer. Religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race or color does not affect employment decisions including hiring, promotion, development opportunities, pay or benefits. We offer fair treatment of employees based on merit and comply with all applicable federal, state and local labor laws.

Employment with is on an "at-will" basis, which means that either an employee or may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause. This handbook is not a contract of employment nor is it intended to create contractual obligations for the company of any kind or alter the at-will employment relationships between and our employees. Only a written agreement, signed by the President of can change the at-will nature of the employment of any individual.

The policies and procedures outlined will be applied at the discretion of management. As such, may deviate from the policies, procedures, benefits and working conditions described in this handbook. The company may also withdraw or change the policies, procedures, benefits and working conditions described in this handbook at any time, for any reason. While it is our goal to provide employees with notice of such changes, prior notice is not required before a change is implemented. Throughout an employee's employment with , it is his or her responsibility to remain up to date on company policies, procedures, benefits and work conditions—both published and unpublished.

No provision in this handbook can be waived without written permission from 's President, or designee. Please review the policies, procedures, working conditions and benefits described in this handbook. You will be asked to affirm that you have read, understand, agree to, abide by and acknowledge your receipt of this employee handbook.

NOTE: This template makes special note of some areas for which state and local laws may require specific customization. However, employers should review all applicable state and local laws for every topic contained in the template to ensure that they customize the language to be compliant with the state and local laws that apply to their specific operations. Employers are also encouraged to consult with legal counsel to ensure that their completed handbooks comply with all applicable laws.

Employment Policies

Americans with Disabilities Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that prohibits employers with 15 or more employees from discriminating against applicants and employees with disabilities. It also requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that they may perform the essential job functions of the position.

complies with all applicable laws concerning the employment of individuals with disabilities and acts in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The company does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

When a job applicant with a disability requests accommodation that can be reasonably provided without creating an undue hardship or causing a workplace safety risk, he or she will be given the same consideration for employment as any other applicant.

will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals (candidates and employees) with disabilities so that they can perform the essential functions of a job, unless the requested accommodations result in the following:

- A direct threat to the safety or well-being of the individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation; or
- An undue hardship to .

Individuals who are currently using illegal drugs are excluded from coverage under the company ADA policy.

The Human Resources department is responsible for implementing this policy, including the resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety, direct threat and undue hardship issues. Contact them with any questions or requests for accommodation.

Employment Termination Policy

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Resignation—voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee
- Termination—involuntary employment termination initiated by
- Layoff—involuntary employment termination initiated by for nondisciplinary reasons

If you wish to resign, we ask that you notify your manager of your anticipated departure date at least two weeks in advance. Of course, as much notice as possible is appreciated by and your co-workers. This notice should be in the form of a written statement.

If you fail to report to work for three consecutive days without informing management of the planned absence, we will assume that you have voluntarily resigned.

In the case of termination due to resignation, retirement or a permanent reduction in the work force, your accrued vacation pay will be paid on a pro-rata basis. Unused personal time is not paid upon termination. In the case of termination, any vacation or personal/sick time used in excess of accrued time will be deducted from your final paycheck given your prior written permission. **(NOTE: Employers should review applicable state laws to evaluate their options for administering vacation/personal time upon termination. Employers should confirm that this policy's language is consistent with their legal obligations and intentions regarding leave payouts.)**

Furthermore, any outstanding financial obligations owed to will also be deducted from your final check, given your prior written permission. If your final check does not sufficiently cover the money owed to the company, you will remain liable for that amount.

A meeting between you and your immediate manager will take place prior to your last day of work. If applicable, your rights concerning continuation of group health benefits will be discussed during this meeting. Parking passes, office keys, company equipment and building passes must be returned at this time, along with all other company property and confidential information.

If you leave in good standing, you may be considered for re-employment.

Except as required by law or by separate agreement, employee salary and benefits will end on the date of termination.

Upon resigning from , you should continue to provide the company with an accurate address for at least one year for tax purposes.

Workplace Conduct

Drug-free Workplace Policy

We recognize alcohol and drug abuse to be potential health, safety and security problems. It is expected that all employees will assist in maintaining a work environment free from the effects of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicating substances. Compliance with this Drug-free Workplace Policy is a condition of employment.

Employees are prohibited from the following when reporting for work, while on the job, on Company or customer premises or surrounding areas or in any vehicle used for Company business:

- The unlawful use, possession, transportation, manufacture, sale, dispensation or other distribution of an illegal or controlled substance or drug paraphernalia
- The unauthorized use, possession, transportation, manufacture, sale, dispensation or other distribution of alcohol
- Being under the influence of alcohol or having a detectable amount of an illegal or controlled substance in the blood or urine (“controlled substance” means a drug or other substance as defined in applicable federal and state laws on drug abuse prevention)

Any employee violating these prohibitions will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Any employee convicted under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring while on the job, on Company or customer premises or in any vehicle used for Company business must notify the Company no later than five days after such a conviction. A conviction includes any finding of guilt or plea of no contest and/or imposition of a fine, jail sentence or other penalty.

Drug and alcohol testing will be carried out in compliance with any applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Disciplinary action will be taken for drug-related crimes, regardless of whether they happened during working hours or on an employee’s own time.

We recognize that employees suffering from alcohol or drug dependence can be treated. We encourage any employee to seek professional care and counseling prior to any violation of this policy.

NOTE: Many states have laws legalizing marijuana for medicinal and/or recreational use, or have laws decriminalizing marijuana use/possession. Employers in states with such laws may want to have their drug-free workplace policies reviewed by legal counsel.

Harassment Policy

is committed to providing a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and retaliation. Therefore, will not tolerate harassment of any type based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older) disability, or genetic information and other characteristics protected under state, federal or local laws. Such conduct in any form is prohibited in the workplace, at work-related functions or outside of work if it affects employees in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees, clients, customers, guests, vendors and persons doing business with .

All employees must ensure they understand this policy and their obligations. Whether an employee's conduct violates this policy will be based how an employee's conduct is received and whether a reasonable person would find the conduct to be in violation of the policy.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. Harassment becomes unlawful where:

- Enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment; or
- The conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile or abusive.

Anti-discrimination laws also prohibit harassment against individuals in retaliation for filing discrimination charges, testifying or participating in investigations, proceedings or lawsuits under these laws, or, for opposing employment practices that they reasonably believe discriminate against individuals, in violation of these laws.

Petty slights, annoyances and isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) will not rise to the level of illegality. To be unlawful, the conduct must create a work environment that would be intimidating, hostile or offensive to reasonable people.

Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name-calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, and interference with work performance. Harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, an agent of the employer, a co-worker or a non-employee.
- The victim does not have to be the person harassed, but can be anyone who is affected by the offensive conduct.
- Unlawful harassment may occur without economic injury to, or discharge of, the victim.

Appropriate performance reviews, counseling or discipline by your manager do not constitute harassment.

If you feel that you are being harassed, you should take the following steps:

- Tell the harasser that his or her actions are not welcome and that they must stop, if you feel comfortable enough to do so.
- Report the incident immediately to your manager or Human Resources representative.
- Report any additional incidents or retaliation that may occur to your manager or Human Resources representative.

Workplace Conduct

All reports will be investigated immediately and thoroughly. Complaints and actions taken to resolve complaints will be handled as confidentially as possible. Appropriate actions will be taken to stop and remedy such conduct, including interim measures during a period of investigation.

Retaliating or discriminating against an employee who reports a suspected incident of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation is prohibited. Employees who violate this policy or retaliate against an employee in any way will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employee Benefits

COBRA Benefits Policy

complies with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). This federal law gives covered employees (and their dependents) who have lost health benefits the right to continue group health plans for limited periods of time under certain circumstances (called “qualifying events”). All administrative rules and processes as well as changes in plan benefits and premiums apply to those on continuation coverage.

Qualifying events for employees that allow up to 18 months of benefit continuation:

- Voluntary or involuntary termination of employment for reasons other than gross misconduct
- Reduction in the number of hours of employment

Qualifying events for spouses that allow up to 18 months of benefit continuation:

- Voluntary or involuntary termination of the covered employee’s employment for any reason other than gross misconduct
- Reduction in the hours worked by the covered employee

Qualifying events for spouses that allow up to 36 months of benefit continuation:

- Covered employee becoming entitled to Medicare
- Divorce or legal separation of the covered employee
- Death of the covered employee

Qualifying events for dependent children that allow up to 18 months of benefit continuation:

- Voluntary or involuntary termination of the covered employee's employment for any reason other than gross misconduct
- Reduction in the hours worked by the covered employee

Qualifying events for dependent children that allow up to 36 months of benefit continuation:

- Loss of dependent child status under the plan rules
- Covered employee becoming entitled to Medicare
- Divorce or legal separation of the covered employee
- Death of the covered employee

In the event of divorce or legal separation, or the loss of dependent child status under the plan, a covered employee or dependent must notify Human Resources within 60 days to maintain his or her COBRA rights. Within 14 days of that notification, Human Resources will provide enrollment materials to the employee or covered dependent.

The covered employee or dependent has 60 days from either the date that coverage would ordinarily have ended under the plan due to a qualifying event or the date of notification, whichever comes later, to elect continuation of coverage. Election of coverage is established by completing and returning enrollment materials to Human Resources.

COBRA premiums will be billed by the applicable insurance provider. The first premium will be due within 45 days of the date of election. Subsequent premiums must be received within the terms set by the provider. Failure to make timely payments will result in termination of coverage without notice.

Workplace Conduct

Continuation coverage will end after 18 months if the qualifying event was a termination or reduction in hours, unless the qualified beneficiary is disabled at the time of the qualifying event, in which case coverage may extend to 29 months. For all other qualifying events, continuation coverage will end after 36 months.

Early termination of COBRA continuation coverage will occur if:

- discontinues its insurance plan;
- The qualified beneficiary fails to make a premium payment in a timely fashion; or
- The person who elected continuation of coverage becomes covered under another insurance plan or Medicare.

NOTE: State COBRA laws differ—check with your legal advisor to make sure that the provision in your handbook is in compliance with your state and federal COBRA laws. COBRA is not applicable to all employers.

Time Away from Work

Funeral Leave Policy

has taken into consideration the personal needs that arise from the death of an immediate family member. In the event of such a loss, an employee will be allowed up to three days of leave with full pay until and including the day of the funeral. Funeral leave will not count against accrued paid time off (PTO), vacation or sick leave. Funeral leave pay will not be granted to employees attending a funeral during periods when they are not at work for other reasons, such as vacation, holidays and illness.

Immediate family includes: a father, mother, spouse, child, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent or any relative who lives with the employee.

Employees should notify their supervisor of the need to use funeral leave. Within a reasonable period of time, the employee may be required to provide verification of need, such as an obituary.

Jury Duty Policy

While it is the duty of every citizen to serve on a jury when called, recognizes that this often means the loss of income. provides jury duty leave to eligible employees in compliance with federal and state laws. pays the difference between the jury pay and regular wages for days when you are unable to report to work because of jury service, assuming you have been employed by the Company for at least 90 days prior. If state law requires a different arrangement, will comply with state law. Questions regarding the Company's jury duty leave policy should be directed to Human Resources.

The above statement applies provided that you:

- Show your supervisor your summons to serve on a jury prior to the time that you are scheduled to serve
- Furnish your supervisor with evidence of having served on a jury for the time claimed

Jury absence will be noted on your time sheet or time card. Time spent on jury duty will not be counted as hours worked for the purpose of computing overtime pay. Regular wages are paid until jury pay is received. Jury pay is then deducted from your regular wages.

This benefit cannot be applied to any court appearance other than jury duty unless such appearance is related to your employment.

Information & Office Security

Emergency Action Plan

recognizes that our people drive our business. As our most critical resource, employees are safeguarded through training, provision of appropriate work surroundings, and procedures that foster protection of health and safety. No duty, no matter what its perceived result, is more important than employee health and safety.

General Guidelines in an Emergency

Stay calm and think through your actions. Know important emergency numbers, such as:

- Fire/Police/Ambulance 911
- Human Resources [insert phone number]
- Operator [insert phone number]

Be aware of your surroundings:

- Know where stairwell exits are located—there are [insert #] stairwell exits on each floor, located [insert location].
- In the event of an emergency, use only stairs—do not take elevators.
- Do not hesitate to call or alert others if you believe that an emergency is occurring.

Fire Evacuation:

- Employees will be notified of a fire by either the fire alarm system or a paged announcement.
- Upon hearing the alarm, immediately evacuate the building using the closest stairwell exit—do not use the elevators or delay evacuation to gather personal belongings, finish a phone call or wait for friends.
- Notify Emergency Floor Leaders or their backups.

Floor Leaders/Backups:

- [List floor numbers and floor leaders/backups]
- Emergency Floor Leaders should be the last persons to leave the area—they should check in conference rooms, restrooms and offices to ensure all employees have evacuated, then close all doors after clearing an area.
- Any employee with mobility, visual, hearing or other conditions that may hinder them from becoming aware of an emergency or evacuation should disclose their condition to Human Resources so that special assistance can be provided should an emergency occur.

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General Practices

Anti-discrimination Policy

does not discriminate against anyone based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age (40 or older), disability status or any other trait that is protected under local, state or federal law. In addition, any kind of discrimination that is based on a protected trait is not allowed in the workplace. We are an equal opportunity employer and we are dedicated to a policy of non-discrimination in all aspects of employment and company business. This policy applies not only to personnel decisions, but also to all aspects of business.

We ask that you respect those around you—co-workers, customers and management alike.

Reports of discrimination will be investigated and disciplinary measures may be taken.

Attendance and Standard Working Hours Policy

Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on both co-workers and . We expect that every employee will be regular and punctual in attendance. This means being in the office, ready to work, at the starting time each day. When you are unable to work due to illness or an accident, please promptly notify your supervisor. In the event your immediate supervisor is unavailable, you must speak with a manager. Leaving a message with another staff member or on voicemail does not constitute an accepted notification of absence. If you do not report for work and is not notified of your status, it will be assumed after two consecutive days of absence that you have voluntarily resigned, and you will be removed from the payroll.

If you become ill at work or must leave the office for some other reason before the end of the workday, be sure to inform your supervisor of the situation.

You will be compensated for authorized absences according to the provisions described in this handbook. Authorized absences beyond the time allowed under that policy are authorized without compensation.

In the event of severe weather, we remain open for business during regularly scheduled working hours. You are expected to report for work in severe weather if it is at all possible to do so safely. In the event we close due to weather, someone in your work group will contact you. Please keep your work group and manager informed on how to reach you on such occasions. See *also Severe Weather Policy*.

Standard working hours are from [insert hour] to [insert hour], Monday through Friday. A [insert amount of time] lunch period is taken at any hour, which is mutually agreeable between the employee and supervisor.

If you will be absent from work during standard working hours for any reason, you must contact your supervisor as soon as possible to avoid disciplinary action.